



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 30, 2004

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### **Mrs. Laura Bush Designates Warrenton, VA a *Preserve America* Community**

**WARRENTON, VA-** Warrenton, Virginia today was honored when Mrs. Laura Bush designated it among the Nation's newest *Preserve America* communities.

"*Preserve America* communities demonstrate that they are committed to preserving America's heritage while ensuring a future filled with opportunities for learning and enjoyment." Mrs. Bush said, "This new community designation program, combined with the *Preserve America* Presidential Awards and Federal support, provides strong incentives for continued preservation of our cultural and natural heritage resources. I commend you for your commitment to preserving an important part of our Nation's historic past for visitors, neighbors, and most, importantly, for children."

Mayor George Fitch received a certificate of designation signed by Mrs. Bush that Warrenton, Virginia is now a *Preserve America* Community. The *Preserve America* initiative is a new White House effort to encourage and support community efforts for the preservation and enjoyment of America's priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include: a greater shared knowledge about the Nation's past; strengthened regional identities and local pride; increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets; and, support for the economic vitality of our communities.

Communities designated through the program receive national recognition for their efforts. Other benefits include appropriate use of the *Preserve America* logo on signs and promotional materials; notification to media, State tourism offices, and visitor bureaus; and listing in a Web-

based directory to showcase preservation efforts and highlight heritage tourism destinations. The Bush Administration's fiscal year 2005 budget contains a request for \$10 million in grant funds for which communities meeting the *Preserve America* criteria will be eligible to apply. These matching fund grants of \$50,000 to \$250,000 would go on a competitive basis to projects that preserve and use important historic resources for promotion of heritage tourism and other economic revitalization projects.

"You are pioneers in this initiative, which shows just how proud the people of Warrenton, Virginia are of their Town, state and their place in our Nation's history," Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton said. "Each community's unique and diverse stories are part of the larger chapter of American heritage, culture and values. It is by visiting and experiencing these special places that we have an opportunity to touch the past, and can best understand how the past touches us."

The Department of the Interior partners with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to administer the *Preserve America* Community program on behalf of the Office of the First Lady. For more information and updates on the initiative, please visit [www.PreserveAmerica.gov](http://www.PreserveAmerica.gov).

Mayor Fitch commented that a lot of people are responsible for this award. The current Council, past Councils, as well as past and current members of the Architectural Review Board and Planning Commission, have worked hard to try to preserve the unique character of our community, while promoting its historic and cultural heritage. Other contributory groups are the Warrenton Garden Club, with its landscaping efforts, the John Singleton Mosby Museum Foundation, the Partnership for Warrenton, Warrenton Tree Board, Warrenton Historical Society and property owners who take pride in maintaining their properties. A well written application influences selection and, therefore, I wish to acknowledge the Town's Zoning Administrator, Andrew Hushour, for the excellent job he did in preparing our application highlighting the Town's accomplishments which has allowed us to be just one of three Virginia communities to receive this award.

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